

## DUKE'S TOBACCO TRUST

SAID TO BE A GREATER MONOPOLY  
THAN STANDARD OIL.May Yet Teach Farmers and Grain  
Growers How to Control Trade  
—Duke's Methods.

New York Letter in Philadelphia Press.

Those who speak of the proposed farmers' trust as a satirical proposition and not seriously conceived are not supported in that view by some of the greater makers of this city. It has been said often that the very conditions of agriculture, and especially of the raising and marketing of wheat, oats and corn, would of themselves prevent any practicable combination of the various individual interests engaged in any of these vocations. Many believe that it is impossible to control the whole product of any line of agriculture unless, as in the case of sugar cane, the production is limited to a comparatively small district. And yet when this objection was raised last evening by one who regards the farmers' trust as impracticable, the reply made by a financier of New York of far more than local reputation was this: "Why should it be any more impracticable to organize one corporation controlling the marketing of wheat and another grain than it has been for John B. Duke and his associates to purchase the entire tobacco crop of the United States and to a great extent that of the whole world?"

He seemed to realize after he had said this that he had spoken more freely than he, as a financier, was justified in doing. But, having made the statement, he neither qualified nor denied it, nor did he pretend that it was merely hearsay upon which he based that comment. So, for the first time outside of this directly interested circle, that is to say, Mr. Duke and his associates, and the financiers who aided them, it became known that this trust, of which one of the greatest of all those that have been organized in the United States, has been able to do a hitherto unheard of thing. Sometimes our merchants have been able to buy and hold this or that agricultural product after it had been marketed by the farmers. One or two houses usually acting by tacit, if not formal, understanding have frequently controlled the output of tea, so far as the United States is concerned. One house in New York has been the master for years of nearly all of the coffee produced, at least that designed for the United States. But that involved the control of the product from the one adopted by Mr. Duke. This statement, upon inquiry, was confirmed. That Mr. Duke, through the corporation of which he is the head, recognized as one of the greatest of trusts, has actually purchased and now controls the entire tobacco raised in the United States, excepting isolated and trivial products here and there, 5 per cent. of that raised in Cuba, dominates the Porto Rico tobacco plantations, and has practically secured control of the greater part of the tobacco produced in every one of the tobacco producing districts in other parts of the world. Furthermore, it is expected that this trust will presently enter into contracts which will give it the control of practically the entire tobacco growth of the world.

Therefore, if organization, financial ability and resources can be so handled as to make it possible to buy and hold and widely diversified a crop as tobacco is, there seems to be no substantial reason why the farmers, if they are able to organize a corporation, secure the ability for organizing and directing and the financial support that are necessary, should not be able to master the marketing of wheat or corn or both as Mr. Duke and his associates have the leaf tobacco market.

IT TAKES ORGANIZATION.  
First of all, however, organization is required. It is less than ten years since Mr. Duke, a bluff, rosy-cheeked, large, somewhat unconventional, imperious or self-willed man, who, nevertheless, in private life is a most agreeable companion, first attracted the attention of the financiers and organizers of this city. He was unconventional in the sense that he seemed to care but little for the fashionable pleasures, the luxurious life, the incidental excitement which seems to be as greatly desired by those who come to New York after having achieved wealth elsewhere as are great industrial and financial successes. He was known to have been born and bred in North Carolina, and to have expanded in business and in purpose so that he went from that State to Richmond. But when he secured the tobacco market, he was rather the conventional, Mr. Western type than that of the South. It was presumed that he would, under the influence of his triumphs in which line generalship, much of it of an original manifestation, had been employed and had been brought about one of the earlier of the trusts, that which obtained almost complete control of the manufacture of cigarettes. In that combination was revealed some of the economic possibilities of combination, as, for instance, the picture and lithographic and other tempting advertising which the competition of cigarette makers had been unable to approximate a million dollars a year, of itself enough to have paid something of a dividend upon the earlier capitalization of the trust.

Whether Mr. Duke passed on naturally from the cigarette trust to the tobacco monopoly which he now possesses in mind from the beginning, or whether he had contemplated after the cigarette trust was organized the mastery of the various other departments of the tobacco manufacture, the prospect, while it might have tempted a man of great daring and ability because of the difficulties that were to be overcome, would have completely checked any who did not possess great audacity, great constructive ability and the power of persuading men. There was first of all what is called the plug tobacco, a great business in itself, and in the hands of many manufacturers. There was next the manufacture of snuff, not so widely distributed, since the snuff-taking habit is somewhat limited. There was the fine-cut chewing tobacco, a business of enormous proportions, and controlled by several independent houses, each of whom seemed to be perfectly entrenched, having command of his own market. And then there was the cigarette business in some respects the most difficult proposition of all.

COMBINED WITH DUKE.  
Mr. Duke's organization, however, was so perfected that he at last obtained control of so many of these differing kinds of tobacco manufacture that it was said of him that he was a true monopolist. But the keen, searching eye of William C. Whitney and that of his next friend, Thomas F. Ryan, and of others who know where opportunities lurk and how best to seize them, recognized the work Mr. Duke and his associates were doing, so that they established, undoubtedly with the deliberate intent of ultimate marriage with Mr. Duke's company, a rival. They had everything that Mr. Duke possessed except an encyclopedic knowledge of the tobacco trade, and of tobacco growth and manufacture. The ability of that kind which they lacked they bought. Their resources as to financing ability and cash were concerned were greater than Mr. Duke's, and they were able to command. Therefore, each of these two groups, recognizing the strength and advantageous position of the other, were persuaded, in the same tendencies which brought the various rival steel producing and iron mining and transportation industries of the United States into one great grouping company with control over a great number of individual corporations. A great difference, however, between the steel trust and that created by Mr. Duke and by Mr. Whitney lies in the fact that whereas the steel trust by no means controls or owns all of the steel producing plants or the iron mines or transportation systems, on the other hand the trust of which Mr. Duke is the dominating influence has created an absolute monopoly. This morning dispatches from Havana state that four of the cigar manufacturers of Havana have entered into agreement not to sell their plants or trade their marks or their cigar output to Mr. Duke's corporation. This, however, is only a trifling opposition to the monopoly, since Mr. Duke's company now admittedly controls 75 per cent. of the factories of Cuba and through that control as large a proportion of the tobacco leaf grown on the island.

America being thus dominated this great trust looked across the ocean. It was stated this morning upon high authority that negotiations are under way and will probably be speedily concluded by which the concession for the monopoly of the

## LAWYER AND ATHLETE



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tobacco sale and market of Turkey will be granted to Mr. Duke's corporation. It already possesses the monopoly in Japan and, the impression is, will speedily possess through contracts with the French government the concession for the monopoly of the manufacture and sale of tobacco in France.

His desperate battle in Great Britain was after all in many respects a war of Chinese noise. The American trust beat the tontine, made preposterous and eccentric propositions, all for the purpose evidently of diverting the attention of the British public from the purpose that was really in mind. It was the most peculiar strategy which the creation of this monopoly has made necessary and it seems to have been successful.

No item in the tobacco trade which in comparison with the whole business may seem of trifling importance was neglected. The monopoly dominated in the Ohio Valley the manufacture and marketing of the humble stogs just as it secured control in the comparatively small leaf tobacco district of the Connecticut River Valley of the market for Connecticut's seed leaf. There were, of course, some independent growers of leaf tobacco who remained independent, but they were benefited rather than harmed by this monopoly, since the comparatively few manufacturers of cigars who maintained their independence became eager customers for the tobacco raised by these independents and therefore paid handsome prices for it.

MACHINERY DID IT.  
Had it not been for machinery it is very doubtful whether Mr. Duke would have been able to perfect this world monopoly. The preparing of tobacco for the various markets and for the many uses to which it is put is with a single exception now done by machinery. Machinery rolls and makes cigarettes, grinds and presses plug tobacco, prepares chewing tobacco, handles snuff from the raw to the finished product, the only exception being that which is necessary being furnished by girls.

But the inventive genius has not yet appeared with machinery by which the leaf can be prepared, rolled, tipped and cut so that the perfect cigar is at hand. The cigar must be made by hand excepting that some very cheap and almost unmarketable brands of cigars manufactured by machinery are placed now and then upon the market. It is this inability to make a perfect machine cigar, and therefore the necessity of depending upon labor for cigar manufacture, that in great measure explains why it is that the tobacco trust does not control the output of cigars as it does all other forms of tobacco prepared for use. The cigar maker in his little shop with two or three hands aiding him may still command his own market.

Time alone can test the strength of this organization. Today it appears to be perfect. Mr. Duke has admittedly matched the superb organization built up by John D. Rockefeller in some respects more easily constructive than the tobacco trust, since petroleum as a natural product is confined to a comparatively limited area. Those who are capable of passing judgment speak of Mr. Duke's achievement as fully equal to that of Rockefeller, with Turkey and Cuba and the control of the ablest business minds familiar with the trade, the sugar trust organization created by H. O. Havemeyer.

Recently the Morton trust, one of the great financial institutions of New York, has been the financial power behind this great monopoly, and it is inferred that it is due in large measure to the almost limitless financial strength and international resources of this institution and its allies that this trust, the most perfect monopoly yet constructed in the United States and apparently soon to monopolize the business throughout the world, has been able to reach across the seas, master Japan, advance the interests of the United States, and secure a foothold in France and Great Britain.

If the farmers of the West desire to counteract an organization that may come absolutely in their hands through corporate arrangement the control of the marketing of the products of the West, they must study, one of the models they must study, one of the organization perfected by John D. Rockefeller, which is a practical monopoly, and the other is the complete monopoly perfected within the past five years and of which John B. Duke is the dominating influence.

The news of this morning telling of the command of 75 per cent. of the cigar manufacture of Cuba, telling also of the advanced negotiations with Turkey and the admission that Mr. Duke and his company have bought the entire tobacco crops not only of the United States but practically all of the world illustrate the perfection of this trust organization.



Annual February Clearance  
of Dress Goods Remnants.

WASSON'S

The Shoe Dep't Offers Phenomenal Values This Week.



## Our First Advance Sale of Furniture



THIS great FURNITURE Department was opened late last October—too late in the season to show the public properly how well we are equipped for the Furniture business. But commencing this month there will be an annual advance sale of Furniture here each February, during which we shall offer the very best makes, the newest and best designs at prices lower than like Furniture has ever been offered in this city.

The First One  
Opens To-Morrow

We have prepared for it with all the services at the command of this great establishment. Orders were placed two months ago with prominent manufacturers in great quantities—every cash discount and all of the benefits due to large buying have lessened the cost to us and to make this February sale one long to be remembered we have priced every piece at the smallest possible margin of profit because we want you to know this department.

## The Entire Fourth Floor Is Filled With Choice Pieces at Popular Prices

Three-piece Bedroom Set, like cut, made of hard wood, golden oak finish, regular price \$20.00, now... **\$14.75**

Three-piece Bedroom Set, golden oak, with swell top dresser, 24x30 oval glass, finely carved bed, regular price \$40.00, now... **\$36.00**

We are showing our new spring line of Go-carts with the new automobile easy running gear and heavy tires; folding Go-carts for street use \$3.50 to... **\$4.00**

Costumers, golden oak or mahogany finish, like cut, regular price \$1.25, for... **59c**

Three-piece Bedroom Set, quartered oak, full swell front with 29x32 front, 28x32 pattern glass, regular price \$75.00, now... **\$58.75**

China Closets, golden oak, mirror in back, three feet four inches wide, round glass ends, regular price \$21.00, for... **\$16.25**

Sanitary Steel Couch, a bed suited for flats, complete with a No. 1 cotton mattress... **\$11.50**

Brass Bed, 14-inch posts, best lacquer finish, guaranteed, regular price \$26.00, now... **\$17.95**

Brass Bed, 2-inch post, bow foot, seven spindle center, ornamental posts, regular price \$35.00... **\$27.50**

Iron Beds, 75 styles to select from, all colors, \$1.75 to... **\$30.00**

